

**Final document of  
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We, the participants of the World Summit of religious leaders – heads and representatives of Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Buddhist and Hindu communities from 32 countries - are gathered here to discuss the vital topics of our time, among which at this meeting we especially underlined the topic of the influence of globalization on religion and traditional values.

The globalization of economy, politics, law, culture remains a complex process. It brought a number of practical benefits for the development of production, trade, science, education, for answers to general challenges in the field of security and the protection of the environment. International contacts assist believers to protect their rights in modern polyethnic and multireligious societies. However, the influence of global processes on the spiritual sphere is given a negative assessment by many.

In connection with globalization, appeals are made to reject the identity and integrity of cultures and religions, to come to a syncretistic way of thought, to a “blending of religions”. However, the history of the end of the last century and the beginning of the current century showed that this approach does not lead us to the unity of people but to even greater divisions among them.

Being aware of this fact, we consider it is important to preserve the opportunity for man freely to follow his own worldview, even if it is not ageeable to world elites. Likewise, peoples must be free to follow their lifestyles even if some consider these lifestyles insufficiently “progressive.”

New information technologies made interconnections between people easier, providing them with new opportunities for self-expression. This made it easier for believers to communicate with co-religionists in other countries. Contacts that required journeys of many months in the past are today established within seconds. Practically every religious community in a matter of seconds can give an account of itself in the world wide web. On the other hand, in the common information space there are more and more audible voices of extremists, false missionaries, proponents of war and terror, those who call for war and violence, those who do not respect the feelings of believers of other religions or the feelings of all believing people.

Globalization did not eliminate threats to the security of states, peoples, and individuals. In the present world we still face the challenges of past centuries like hunger, social inequality, pollution of the environment, military conflicts on an ethno-religious basis. Moreover, new problems have been added to the old ones.

Rich countries become richer, poor ones become poorer. The unfair division of world income causes more and more criticism. . In the dominant political and economic culture the value of man and of people is negated by the search for material welfare, comfort and entertainment. In a very small number of countries a society of high and sometimes excessive consumption is being built. Many consider that this happens due to the long-lasting and current exploitation of countries of the “second” and “third” worlds. Today religious communities are able to give an adequate answer to this challenge, offering alternative models of development, at the basis of which are spiritual values common to many peoples - justice, solidarity, love, and respect for man, for traditions of many centuries, and for the culture of our peoples. Religious leaders can provide an important contribution to solving the world’s economic and social problems at the macro-level of international contacts as well as on the level of each country and specific community.

Today terrorism, once connected to concrete regions, has turned into an international problem and the fight against it has become noticeably more complicated. People who sow death and destruction attempt to use religious slogans to conceal their objectives. Some of them call themselves “religious leaders” and are already creating whole alternative “theological theories”, justifying the killing of people on the basis of religion and nationality. Even more cynical is the behavior of those who finance terrorism or provide for the dissemination of the ideology connected with terrorism.

Religious leaders have frequently declared that acts of terror are crimes from the point of view of any traditional faith. However, we should not think that religious leaders are able to change the world with their own power alone. Their appeals influence only those who are open to the conclusions of faith and reason. Criminals unfortunately best understand the language of violence. This is why religious and political doctrines promoting aggressive violence against peaceful people, must be prohibited in all the world, just as Nazism is prohibited in many countries. At the same time we know: an idea can be conquered only by another idea. Therefore it is precisely traditional religious communities which are called to stand against the distortion of religious values in favor of extremists and terrorists. For this purpose, in particular, it is necessary not only to maintain or revive the tradition of religious education and enlightenment, but also to fill it with the spirit of peace and tolerance.

Another serious problem for the whole world is drug addiction, which every year takes millions of human lives. International drug cartels act like terrorist organizations, constantly expanding the circle of people involved in drug use and making billions in profits built on their sufferings and death. Just as is the case with terrorism, the fight against the drug trade must be conducted consistently and uncompromisingly by the whole international community.

In the contemporary world many attempt to push religion to the periphery of public life. These people insist on the secularity of public space, excluding from it any expression of religion. Parallel to this insistence, they reject the very fact of the existence of unchangeable moral values in man and society. This opens the way to a complete moral nihilism. If moral norms continue to be diluted and changed depending on fashion, gain, or pragmatism, destruction awaits humanity. Neither knowledge, nor technical achievements and laws will save a world where there will be no moral measure of life, where there will be no eternal and unchangeable law of behavior given to people by Creator.

In present conditions, the cooperation of traditional religious communities becomes more and more vital. The responsibility for the future of the world motivates us to declare together that compromises in the choice between sin and goodness are inadmissible and to stand together against egoism, violence and enmity.

We call for the peace in which each state can preserve the integrity of its territory. At the same time, in such a peace each people should develop freely and without constraint, determining its own destiny and adequately participating in all international decision-making touching upon its life. Conflicts must be resolved fairly, taking into account the interests of all their participants, based on norms and principles adopted by the international community.

During the past century believers succeeded in making their values an inspiration even for diplomacy. Political summits more and more frequently involve the participation of religious leaders and many nations make inter-religious dialogue one of their political priorities. Of course the call for peace sounds weaker than the one for war. However, it is due to people of good will that our planet has not been overcome by the violence of a new world war. In this regard the UN and UNESCO deserve high appreciation for their recent initiatives on the development of collaboration among religious communities and their dialogue with politicians. We support the proposals concerning the religious dimension of the UNESCO panel "Peace and the Dialogue of Cultures," which were adopted by the high-level group in partnership with UNESCO meeting in the framework of the present summit. We are convinced that an effective mechanism for dialogue with the international community will help in the search for ways to overcome the negative consequences of globalization, and for positive changes towards a better world context in the political, economic, and juridical dimensions.

We appeal for the development of inter-religious collaboration on all levels and in all formats – in particular, we consider the creation of inter-religious councils in our countries and regions to be useful. Common action can be undertaken in local situations, especially in the spheres of social work and the education of young people.

More than half a century of regular meetings of religious leaders has shown how much religious leaders can accomplish when they act *together*. There was no alternative to inter-religious

dialogue in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and there is no alternative today. And we, religious leaders, must do everything in our power to preserve peace among nations and peoples.